

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1-7 and 9-31 are rejected.

Claim 8 is objected to.

Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-7, 9-14, 16, 17, 21-23 and 26-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rhoads-1996 (U.S. Patent No. 6,122,403), hereinafter referred to as Rhoads-1996, in view of Rhoads-2000 (U.S. Patent No. 6,424,725 B1), hereinafter referred to as Rhoads-2000.

Claims 15, 18-20, 24 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rhoads-1996 (U.S. Patent No. 6,122,403), hereinafter referred to as Rhoads-1996, in view of Rhoads-2000 (U.S. Patent No. 6,424,725 B1), hereinafter referred to as Rhoads-2000, and in view of Koopman (U.S. Patent No. 5,363,448), hereinafter referred to as Koopman.

Independent claims 1, 26, 27 and 28 have been amended to include limitations from the presently allowable claim 8. All the pending claims should now be allowed

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Patent Application No.: 09/781,304

Attorney Docket No.: Q84575

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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